THE BUSH-CHENEY DRUG EMPIRE

The Bush family's involvement in drug-running is an open secret, but Dick Cheney's direct link to a global drug pipeline through a US construction company is less well known.

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FROM MEDELLIN TO MOSCOW WITH BROWN & ROOT

alliburton Corporation's Brown & Root is one of the major components of the Bush-Cheney Drug Empire. The success of Bush Vice-Presidential running mate Richard Cheney at leading Halliburton, Inc. to a five-year, US\$3.8 billion "pig-out" on federal contracts and taxpayer-insured loans is only a partial indicator of what may happen, now that the Bush ticket has won the US presidential election.

A closer look at available research, including an August 2, 2000 report by the Center for Public Integrity (CPI) (www.public-i.org), suggests that drug money has played a role in the successes achieved by Halliburton under Cheney's tenure as CEO from 1995 to 2000. This is especially true for Halliburton's most famous subsidiary, heavy construction and oil giant Brown & Root. A deeper look into history reveals that Brown & Root's past—as well as the past of Dick Cheney himself—connects to the international drug trade on more than one occasion and in more than one way.

Last June, the lead Washington, DC, attorney for a major Russian oil company connected in law enforcement reports to heroin smuggling, and also a beneficiary of US-backed loans to pay for Brown & Root contracts in Russia, held a \$2.2 million fundraiser to fill the already bulging coffers of presidential candidate George W. Bush. This is not the first time that Brown & Root has been connected to illegal drugs, and the fact is that this "poster child" of American industry may also be a key player in Wall Street's efforts to maintain domination of the half-trillion-dollar-a-year global drug trade and its profits. And Dick Cheney, who has also come closer to illegal drugs than most suspect and who is also Halliburton's largest individual shareholder (\$45.5 million), has a vested interest in seeing to it that Brown & Root's successes continue.

Of all the American companies dealing directly with the US military and providing cover for CIA operations, few firms can match the global presence of this giant construction powerhouse which employs 20,000 people in more than 100 countries. Through its sister companies or joint ventures, Brown & Root can build offshore oil rigs, drill wells and construct and operate everything from harbours and pipelines to highways and nuclear reactors. It can train and arm security forces and it can now also feed, supply and house armies. One key beacon of Brown & Root's overwhelming appeal to agencies like the CIA is that, as it proudly announces from its own corporate web page, it has received the contract to dismantle ageing Russian nuclear-tipped ICBMs in their silos. Furthermore, the relationships between key institutions, players and the Bushes themselves suggest that under a George "W" Administration the Bush family and its allies, using Brown & Root as the operational interface, may well be able to control the drug trade all the way from Medellín to Moscow.

Originally formed as a heavy construction company to build dams, Brown & Root grew its operations via shrewd political contributions to Senate candidate Lyndon Johnson in 1948. Expanding into the building of oil platforms, military bases, ports, nuclear facilities, harbours and tunnels, Brown & Root virtually underwrote LBJ's political career. It prospered as a result, making billions on US Government contracts during the Vietnam War. The *Austin Chronicle*, in an August 28, 2000 Op-Ed piece entitled "The Candidate from Brown & Root", labels Republican Cheney as the political dispenser of Brown & Root's largesse. According to political campaign records, during Cheney's five-year tenure at Halliburton the company's political contributions more than doubled to \$1.2 million. Not surprisingly, most of that money went to Republican candidates.

Independent news service Newsmakingnews also describes how in 1998, with Cheney as Chairman, Halliburton spent \$8.1 billion to purchase oil industry equipment and

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drilling supplier Dresser Industries. This made Halliburton a corporation that will have a presence in almost any future oil drilling operation anywhere in the world. And it also brought back into the family fold the company which had once (also in 1948) sent a plane to fetch the new Yale graduate George H.W. Bush to begin his career in the Texas oil business. Bush the elder's father, Prescott, served as a managing director for the firm that once owned Dresser: Brown Brothers Harriman.

BROWN & ROOT'S SPECIAL OPERATIONS

It is clear that everywhere there is oil there is Brown & Root. But increasingly, everywhere there is war or insurrection there is Brown & Root also. From Bosnia and Kosovo to Chechnya, Rwanda, Burma, Pakistan, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, Iran, Libya, Mexico and Colombia, Brown & Root's traditional operations have expanded from heavy construction to include the provision

of logistical support for the US military. Now, instead of US Army quartermasters, the world is likely to see Brown & Root warehouses storing and managing everything from uniforms and rations to vehicles.

Dramatic expansion of Brown & Root's operations in Colombia also suggests Bush preparations for a war-inspired feeding frenzy as a part of "Plan Colombia". This is consistent with moves by former Bush Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady to open a joint Colombian–American investment partnership called Corfinsura for the financing of major construction projects with the Colombian Antioquia Syndicate, headquartered in Medellín (see FTW, June

And expectations of a ground war in Colombia may explain why Brown & Root, in a 2000 Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) filing, reported that in addition to owning more than 800,000 square feet of warehouse space in Colombia, it also leases another 122,000 square feet. According to the Brown & Root Energy Services Group filing, the only other places where the company maintains warehouse space are in Mexico (525,000 square feet) and the United States (38,000 square feet).

According to the website of Colombia's Foreign Investment Promotion Agency, Brown & Root had no presence in the country until 1997. What does Brown & Root—which according to Associated Press (AP) has made more than \$2 billion supporting and supplying US troops—know about Colombia that the United States public does not? Why the need for almost a million square feet of warehouse space which can be transferred from one Brown & Root operation (energy services) to another (military support) with the stroke of a pen?

As described by AP, during the "Iran-Contra" era Congressman Dick Cheney of the House Intelligence Committee was a rabid supporter of Marine Lt Col. Oliver North. This was in spite of the fact that North had lied to Cheney in a private 1986 White House briefing. Oliver North's own diaries and subsequent investigations by the CIA Inspector-General have irrevocably tied him directly to cocaine smuggling during the 1980s and the opening of

bank accounts for one firm moving four tons of cocaine a month. This, however, did not stop Cheney from actively supporting North's (unsuccessful) 1994 run for the US Senate from Virginia—just a year before he took over the reins at Brown & Root's parent company, Dallas-based Halliburton, Inc., in 1995.

As the Bush Secretary of Defense during *Desert Shield/Desert Storm* (1990–91), Cheney also directed special operations involving Kurdish rebels in northern Iran. The Kurds' primary source of income for more than 50 years has been heroin smuggling from Afghanistan and Pakistan through Iran, Iraq and Turkey.

Having had some personal experience with Brown & Root, I noted carefully when the *Los Angeles Times* observed that on March 22, 1991 a group of gunmen burst into the Ankara, Turkey, offices of joint venture Vinnell, Brown & Root and assassinated retired Air Force Chief Master Sergeant John Gandy.

In March 1991, tens of thousands of Kurdish refugees, long-

time assets of the CIA, were being massacred by Saddam Hussein in the wake of the Gulf War. Saddam, seeking to destroy any hopes of a successful Kurdish revolt, found it easy to kill thousands of the unwanted Kurds who had fled to the Turkish border seeking sanctuary. There, Turkish security forces—trained in part by the Vinnell, Brown & Root partnership—turned thousands of Kurds back into certain death.

Today, the Vinnell Corporation (a TRW company) is one of the three pre-eminent private mercenary corporations in the world, along with the firms MPRI and DynCorp (see *FTW*, June 2000). It is also the domi-

nant entity for the training of security forces throughout the Middle East.

Not surprisingly, the Turkish border regions in question were the primary transshipment points for heroin produced in Afghanistan and Pakistan, destined for the markets of Europe.

A confidential source with intelligence experience in the region subsequently told me that the Kurds "got some payback against the folks that used to help them move their drugs". He openly acknowledged that Brown & Root and the Vinnell Corporation both routinely provided NOC (non-official cover) for CIA officers. But I already

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knew that.

From 1994 to 1999, during US military intervention in the Balkans—where, according to *The Christian Science Monitor* and *Jane's Intelligence Review*, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) controls 70 per cent of the heroin entering Western Europe—Cheney's Brown & Root made billions of dollars supplying US troops from vast facilities in the region. Brown & Root support operations continue in Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia to this day.

Dick Cheney's footprints have come closer to drugs than one might suspect. The Center for Public Integrity's August 2000 report brought them even closer. It would be correct to say that there is a direct linkage of Brown & Root facilities—often set up in remote, hazardous regions—with every drug-producing region and every drug-consuming region in the world. These coincidences, in and of themselves, do not prove complicity in the trade. Other facts, however, lead inescapably in that direction.

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A DIRECT DRUG LINK TO DICK CHENEY

The CPI report entitled "Cheney Led Halliburton to Feast at Federal Trough", written by veteran journalists Knut Royce and Nathaniel Heller, describes how, under five years of Cheney's leadership, Halliburton, largely through subsidiary Brown & Root, enjoyed \$3.8 billion in federal contracts and taxpayerinsured loans. The loans had been granted by the Export-Import Bank (EXIM) and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). According to Ralph McGehee's CIA Base, both institutions are heavily infiltrated by the CIA and routinely provide NOC to its officers.

One of those loans, to Russian financial/banking conglomerate

The Alfa Group of Companies, contained \$292 million to pay for Brown & Root's contract to refurbish a Siberian oil field owned by the Russian Tyumen Oil Company. The Alfa Group completed its 51 per cent acquisition of Tyumen Oil in what was allegedly a rigged bidding process in 1998. An official Russian Government report claims that The Alfa Group's top executives, oligarchs Mikhail Fridman and Pyotr Aven, "allegedly participated in the transit of drugs from Southeast Asia through Russia and into Europe". These same executives, Fridman and Aven, who

reportedly smuggled the heroin in connection with Russia's Solntsevo mob family, were the same ones who applied for the EXIM loans that Halliburton's lobbying later safely secured. As a result, Brown & Root's work in Alfa Tyumen oil fields could continue—and expand.

After describing how organised criminal interests in The Alfa Group had allegedly stolen the oil field by fraud, the CPI storyusing official reports from the FSB (the Russian equivalent of the FBI), oil companies such as BP-Amoco, former CIA and KGB officers and press accounts—then established a solid link to Alfa Tyumen and the transportation of heroin. In 1995, sacks of heroin disguised as sugar had been stolen from a rail container leased by

Alfa Eko and sold in the Siberian town of Khabarovsk. A problem arose when many residents of the town became "intoxicated" or "poisoned".

The CPI story also stated: "The FSB report said that within days of the incident, Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) agents conducted raids of Alfa Eko buildings and found 'drugs and other compromising docu-

"Both reports claim that Alfa Bank has laundered drug funds from Russian and Colombian drug cartels.

"The FSB document claims that at the end of 1993, a top Alfa official met with Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela, the now imprisoned financial mastermind of Colombia's notorious Cali cartel, 'to conclude an agreement about the transfer of money into the Alfa Bank from offshore zones such as the Bahamas, Gibraltar and others'. The plan was to insert it back into the Russian economy through the purchase of stock in Russian companies.

"...He [the former KGB agent] reported that there was evidence 'regarding [Alfa Bank's] involvement with the money laundering of...Latin American drug cartels'."

It then becomes harder for Cheney and Halliburton to assert mere coincidence in all of this, as CPI reported that Tyumen's lead Washington attorney, James C. Langdon, Jr, at the firm of Aikin Gump, "...helped coordinate a \$2.2 million fundraiser for Bush this June. He then agreed to help recruit 100 lawyers and lobbyists in the capital to raise \$25,000 each for W's campaign."

The heroin mentioned in the CPI story originated in Laos, where longtime Bush allies and covert warriors Richard Armitage and retired CIA ADDO (Associate Deputy Director of

> Operations) Ted Shackley have been repeatedly linked to the drug trade.

> It then made its way across Southeast Asia to Vietnam, probably the port of Haiphong. Then the heroin was shipped to Russia's Pacific port of Vladivostok, from where it was subsequently bounced across Siberia by rail and then by truck or rail to Europe, passing through the hands of Russian Mafia leaders in Chechnya and Azerbaijan. Chechnya and Azerbaijan are hotbeds of both armed conflict and oil exploration, and Brown & Root has operations all along this route.

As described in previous issues of FTW, this long, expensive and tortuous path was hastily established after President George Bush's personal envoy Richard Armitage, holding the rank of Ambassador, had travelled to the former Soviet Union to assist it with its "economic development" in 1989. The obstacles, then, to a more direct, profitable and efficient route from Afghanistan and Pakistan through Turkey into Europe were a cohesive Yugoslavian/Serbian Government controlling the Balkans and continuing instability in the Golden Crescent of Pakistan/ Afghanistan. Also, there was no other way, using heroin from the Golden Triangle (Burma, Laos and Thailand), to deal with China and India but to go around them.



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It is perhaps not by coincidence again that Cheney and Armitage share membership in the prestigious Aspen Institute, an exclusive bi-partisan research think-tank, and also in the US–Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce. In November 1999, in what may be a portent of things to come, Armitage played the role of Secretary of Defense in a practical exercise at the Council on Foreign Relations, of which he and Cheney are both members.

Many of the longest-serving and best Bush apparatchiks like Richard Armitage and CIA veteran Ted Shackley have heavy political baggage. Since governmental power is so evenly split after the long election as to appear contrived, it is unlikely that controversial nominees for cabinet positions like Armitage or Shackley will be placed before a 50–50 Senate which is unlikely to confirm them. Armitage is more likely to appear as a quasi-official adviser in troubled European regions. This is similar to the roles he performed for George Bush in 1989 in Russia and in

1992 in Albania. Armitage's travels presaged both the Chechen and Kosovar conflicts and the rampant expansion of the drug trade through those regions.

DRUG PIPELINE STREAMLINED

The Clinton Administration took care of all that wasted travel for heroin with the 1999 destruction of Serbia and Kosovo and the installation of the KLA as a regional power. That opened a direct line from Afghanistan to Western Europe—and Brown & Root was right in the middle of that, too.

The Clinton skill at streamlining drug operations was described in detail in the April 2000 issue of *FTW* in a story entitled "The Democratic Party's Presidential Drug Money Pipeline". That article has since been reprinted in three countries. The essence of the drug economic lesson was that by growing opium in Colombia and by smuggling both cocaine and heroin from Colombia to New York City through the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico (a virtual straight line), traditional smuggling routes could be shortened or even eliminated. This reduced both risk and cost, increased profits and eliminated competition.

FTW suspects the hand of Medellín cartel co-founder Carlos Lehder in this process, and it is interesting to note that Lehder, released from prison under Clinton in 1995, is now active in both

the Bahamas and South America. Lehder was known during the 1980s as "the genius of transportation". I can well imagine Dick Cheney, having witnessed the complete restructuring of the global drug trade in the last eight years, going to George W. and saying, "Look, I know how we can make it even better".

One thing is for certain. As quoted in the CPI article, one Halliburton vice-president noted that if the Bush–Cheney ticket were elected, "the company's government contracts would obviously go through the roof".

THE DARK PAST

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In July 1977, this writer, then a Los Angeles Police officer, struggled to make sense of a world gone haywire. In a last-ditch effort to salvage a relationship with my fiancée, Nordica Theodora D'Orsay (Teddy), a CIA contract agent, I had travelled to New Orleans to find her. On a hastily arranged vacation,

secured with the blessing of my commanding officer, Captain Jesse Brewer of LAPD, I had gone on my own, unofficially, to avoid the scrutiny of LAPD's Organized Crime Intelligence Division (OCID).

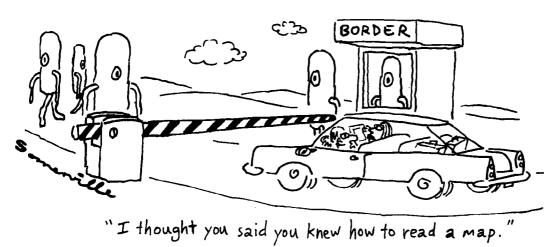
Teddy had wanted me to join her operations from within the ranks of LAPD, starting in the late spring of 1976. I had refused to get involved with drugs in any way, and everything she mentioned seemed to involve either heroin or cocaine, along with the guns which she was always moving out of the country. The Director of the CIA

then was George Herbert Walker Bush.

Although officially on staff at the LAPD Academy at the time, I had been unofficially lent to OCID since January when Teddy, announcing the start of a new operation planned in the fall of 1976, suddenly disappeared. She left many people, including me, baffled and twisting in the breeze. The OCID detectives had been pressuring me hard for information about her and what I knew of her activities. It was information I could not give them. Hoping against hope that I would find some way to understand her involvement with CIA, LAPD, the royal family of Iran, the Mafia and drugs, I set out alone into eight days of Dantean revelations which have determined the course of my life from that day to this.

Arriving in New Orleans in early July 1977, I found Teddy liv-

ing in an apartment across the river in Gretna. Equipped with scrambler phones and night vision devices, and working from sealed communiqués delivered by navy and air force personnel from nearby Belle Chasse Naval Air Station, she was involved in something truly ugly. Teddy was arranging for large quantities weapons to be loaded onto ships leaving for Iran. At the same time, she was working with Mafia associates of New Orleans Mafia boss Carlos



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Marcello to coordinate the movement of service boats which were bringing large quantities of heroin into the city. The boats arrived at Marcello-controlled docks, unmolested by even the New Orleans police she introduced me to, along with divers, military men, former Green Berets and CIA personnel. The service boats were retrieving the heroin from oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico, in international waters—oil rigs built and serviced by Brown & Root.

The guns which Teddy monitored, apparently Vietnam-era surplus AK47s and M16s, were being loaded onto ships also owned or leased by Brown & Root. And more than once during the eight days I spent in New Orleans, I met and ate at restaurants with Brown & Root employees who were boarding those ships and leaving for Iran within days. Once, while leaving a bar and apparently having asked the wrong question, I was shot at in an attempt to scare me off.

Disgusted and heartbroken at witnessing my fiancée and my government smuggling drugs, I ended the relationship. Returning

home to LA, I made a clean breast and reported all the activity I had seen, including the connections to Brown & Root, to LAPD intelligence officers. They promptly told me that I was crazy.

Forced out of LAPD under threat of death at the end of 1978, I made complaints to LAPD's Internal Affairs Division and to the LA office of the FBI under the command of FBI SAC Ted Gunderson. I and my attorney wrote to the politicians, the Department of Justice and the CIA, and contacted the *Los Angeles Times*. The FBI and the LAPD said that I was crazy.

A 1981 two-part news story in the Los Angeles Herald Examiner revealed that the FBI had taken Teddy into custody and then released her before classifying their investigation without further action. Former New Orleans Crime Commissioner Aaron Cohen told reporter Randall Sullivan that he found my description of events perfectly plausible after his 30 years of studying Louisiana's organised crime operations.

To this day, a CIA report prepared as a result of my complaint remains classified and exempt from release, pursuant to executive order of the President, in the interests of national

security and because it would reveal the identities of CIA agents.

On October 26, 1981, in the basement of the West Wing of the White House, I reported on what I had seen in New Orleans to my friend and UCLA classmate, Craig Fuller. Fuller went on to become Chief of Staff to Vice- President Bush from 1981 to 1985.

In 1982, then UCLA political science professor Paul Jabber filled in many of the pieces in my quest to understand what I had seen in New Orleans. He was qualified to do so because he had served as a CIA and State Department consultant to the Carter Administration.

Paul explained that, after a 1975 treaty between the Shah of Iran and Saddam Hussein of Iraq, the Shah had cut off all overt military support for Kurdish rebels fighting Saddam from the north of Iraq. In exchange, the Shah had gained access to the Shatt al'Arab waterway so that he could multiply his oil exports

and income. Not wanting to lose a valuable long-term asset in the Kurds, the CIA had then used Brown & Root—which operated in both countries and maintained port facilities in the Persian Gulf and near Shatt al'Arab—to rearm the Kurds. The whole operation had been financed with heroin. Paul was matter-of-fact about it.

In 1983, Paul Jabber left UCLA to become a Vice-President of Banker's Trust and Chairman of the Middle East Department of the Council on Foreign Relations.

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST FREE ENTERPRISE

If one is courageous enough to seek an "operating system" which theoretically explains what *FTW* has just described for you, one need look no further than a fabulous two-part article published in *Le Monde Diplomatique* in April 2000. The stories, focusing heavily on drug capital, are titled "Crime, The World's Biggest Free Enterprise". The brilliant and penetrating words of authors Christian de Brie and Jean de Maillard do a better job of explaining the actual world economic and political situation than

anything I have ever read.

De Brie writes: "By allowing capital to flow unchecked from one end of the world to the other, globalisation and abandonment of sovereignty have together fostered the explosive growth of an outlaw financial market...

"It is a coherent system closely linked to the expansion of modern capitalism and based on an association of three partners: governments, transnational corporations and mafias. Business is business: financial crime is first and foremost a market, thriving and structured, ruled by supply and demand.

"Big business complicity and political laissez faire is the only way that large-scale

organised crime can launder and recycle the fabulous proceeds of its activities. And the transnationals need the support of governments and the neutrality of regulatory authorities in order to consolidate their positions, increase their profits, withstand and crush the competition, pull off the 'deal of the century' and finance their illicit operations. Politicians are directly involved and their ability to intervene depends on the backing and the funding that keep them in power. This collusion of interests is an essential part of the world economy, the oil that

keeps the wheels of capitalism turning."

After confronting CIA Director John Deutch on world television on November 15, 1996, I was interviewed by the staff of both the Senate and House Intelligence Committees. I prepared written testimony for Senate Intelligence which I submitted, although I was never called to testify. In every one of those interviews and in my written testimony and every lecture since that time, I have told the story of Brown & Root.

IN GOD (GOLD, OIL, DRUGS) WE TRUST

Make no mistake about it. The United States is preparing for war. Events immediately following the 2000 US election debacle are ominous predictors for the Bush-Cheney Administration. While not all of the cabinet posts are yet filled, the key posts of Treasury, Defense, Justice and National Security Advisor point to

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the most militarised oil-and-big-business-friendly administration in 35 years.

So thorough is the plan for control of the government that the son of Secretary of State (Designate) Colin Powell, in an appointment which has yet to receive much notice, has been appointed the new Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission. This is the body which monitors and polices all commercial broadcasting in the United States.

With Colin Powell as Secretary of State, Donald Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense and Dick Cheney as Vice-President, the highest levels of the US Government now house two former

Secretaries of Defense and the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The new National Security Advisor, Condoleeza Rice, while African-American, has a long track record of service to Republican administrations and also sits on the board of directors of Chevron Oil, which has recently named an oil tanker after her. Her lacklustre operational credentials indicate that she will probably serve as the designated messenger between Bush, Powell, Rumsfeld and Cheney and as the African-American poster girl for coming military adventurism.

Of special interest as this story goes to press is the strongest rumour among my sources that current CIA Director George Tenet, appointed to the post by President Clinton in 1997, will remain in the new Bush Administration. Based upon this writer's study of CIA operations and history, this strongly suggests two things. Firstly, it implies that the CIA, as a non-partisan servant of Wall Street, feels that its interests have been—and will continue to be—well served by Tenet, who is well liked at Langley. Most importantly, however, it suggests that there are operations, both covert and otherwise, in motion under CIA control which are moving at a speed and with a force that will not accept a break in rhythm for a change in directors. Most critical among these would be the start of the planned conflict in Colombia.

Since the advent of the atomic bomb, the United States has always needed two kinds of enemies. On one level, it has needed a tactical enemy that it can go out and fight in the field in a shooting war. Since 1945, these enemies have been created and appeared as North Korea, North Vietnam, Grenada, El Salvador, Panama, Iraq and now Colombia. On another level, however, the US needs a strategic enemy that will justify outrageous expenditures of capital for strategic weapon systems like ICBMs, *Trident* submarines and "Star Wars" missile defence systems.

With the new Bush Administration already contemplating a policy change that would make Colombian rebels (as opposed to

drug traffickers) the targets of US military aid, as has been reported by AP, there is no doubt where the next shooting war is going to be. And with the militarised Bush cabinet making a missile defence shield a priority, it looks as though either China or Russia will become the next big enemy of choice. In the end, profitability will decide. For the moment, the less-than-credible paper threat is from unspecified "rogue nations". We can be certain, however, that the shifting economic pressure plates around the world will reveal our next demon soon enough. Halliburton is uniquely placed to profit from either

financial plan for prolonged ground wars.

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eventuality.

As it was in Vietnam, Central America and Kosovo, drugs continue to be a huge part of the financial plan for prolonged ground wars. As one cynic put it, "GOD" stands for "Gold, Oil and Drugs". We can be assured that an empire (as opposed to a republic) is emerging in the United States more quickly than many have expected. And the Bush Administration is already acting in a "godlike" manner. It is an empire that may have little need of even the pretence of democracy as American corporate fascism removes its mask in the wake of our election circus, the prostitution of our Supreme Court and the virtual destruction of American government as a servant of anything other than money, greed and power.

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